

“Serving Those Who Served”

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www.dva.wa.gov

Vol. 6 Issue 3

SUMMER 2005

Washington State Adopt an Armory Seeking Community Involvement

Adopt An Armory is part of the Memorandum of Understanding signed in November, 2004, by local, state and federal partners pledging their commitment to serve our state's returning National Guard and Reserve soldiers.

The purpose of this project is to help ease the burden for military families of deployed personnel by connecting them with volunteer services of community, service and faith-based organizations and discounted services of businesses.

By becoming involved, you will let the families of military personnel know you support their efforts and sacrifices. It will also lessen the burden of those who have been left behind while family members are fulfilling their military service overseas.

Businesses and organizations that would like to offer volunteer services, product and service discounts or other opportunities to help the families of deployed military personnel are encouraged to contact the Family Readiness Coordinator in your area, or contact the Washington National Guard Family Support Program Director at 1-800-364-7492.

Continued on page 12

“Welcome Them Home” A Long-Term Commitment



MG Lawrence J. Johnson, Command General of the 70th Regional Readiness Command, USAR, joins Memorandum of Understanding partnership on behalf of the U.S. Army Reserve. Franklin J. Pierce, Ass't Director of Department of Veterans Affairs Regional Office and John E. Lee, Deputy Director of WDVA, join MG Johnson as witnesses. The U.S. Naval Reserve of Washington is expected to join the partnership in the near future.

In November 2004, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed by local, state and federal partners pledging their commitment to serve our state's returning National Guard and Reserve soldiers.

Since the time of that agreement, thousands of Washington state's returning servicemen and women have been provided information in a variety of meetings and activities that are designed to help them transition back to civilian life.

Each returning service member received a Welcome Home letter from Governor Christine Gregoire, thanking them for their service and letting them know how to get assistance, if needed.

During February, March and April, 18 Soldier Readiness Processing Briefings were conducted at Fort Lewis by Martin Anderson, Tom Riggs and Joel Berlien.

These briefings provided a recap of federal VA benefits and health enrollment, employment assistance and Washington State benefits to approximately 3,400 servicemen and women of the 81st Brigade.

Starting in July, and continuing through November, Family Activity Days will be held throughout the state to provide service members and their families personalized customer service in understanding and filing for Veterans benefits and entitlements.

The Family Activity Days are being held within three to six months of re-deployment, at a time when the homecoming excitement has started to fade and the realities of medical and mental conditions associated with wartime service might be surfacing.

Under the leadership of WDVA's Tom Riggs, eight teams have been formed to coordinate the more than 30 scheduled events.

Each team will consist of a total of 16 representatives from the Veterans Health Administration (VHA), TriCare/TriWest, VA Regional Office (VARO), Washington State Employment Security Department (ESD), Employer Support of Guard and Reserve (ESGR), Department of Labor Vets (DOL/VETS), Veteran Service Officers (VSO) Family Assistance Center Coordinator (FACC), as well as federal and state Mental Health/Readjustment Counselors and National Guard Recruiter/Retention NCO's.

“It will take the collective effort of all the MOU partners to successfully provide assistance to our State's newest veterans,” said John Lee, WDVA's deputy director, during a planning meeting with MOU representatives.

Schedule of Family Activity Days on page 5

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Director's Message

Veteran Voices

Veteran Voices is published for Washington state veterans and their family members, WDVA employees and Veterans Home residents.

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John M. King, WDVA Director

Partnerships on a National Level

Winston Churchill once said, "To improve is to change; to be perfect is to change often". And while government's seemingly constant state of change has not yet resulted in perfection, one thing we can be sure of, is that government will continue to change. Our challenge is to remain poised and ready to change with it when appropriate, or work with our many partners to defeat (or modify) proposed changes when necessary.

At the national level, proposed changes often seem painful and impossible to live with. The federal government seems to be aggressively unveiling initiatives aimed at controlling costs by reducing services and/or restricting access. Some of these changes have been

implemented, such as restrictions on Category 7 & 8 veterans receiving health care. But through effective partnerships and advocacy, some have been delayed and are hopefully being fully analyzed.

For Washington State's Veterans Homes, the most significant success to date was defeating a change that would have kept State Veterans Homes from collecting Medicaid and VA Per Diem to pay for veterans nursing home care. Thanks to a partnership between two national organizations, who took this issue to our Congressional leaders, a federal law was passed last year specifying that state homes can continue to receive both Medicaid and VA Per Diem. (The associations are, The National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs, where I serve as Sr. Vice President, and the National Association of State Veterans Homes, where WDVA Assistant Director Alfie Alvarado-Ramos serves as President.)

New proposals at the national level would restrict access to health care by raising the bar of eligibility. The Administration proposes enrollment fees and increased co-payments for those veterans still eligible, and eliminating eligibility for 83% of Veterans currently served in State Veterans Homes. And while strong advocacy from numerous partners, including our State and National Veteran Service Organizations and National Homes and Director's Associations, appear to have postponed the implementation of these changes this year, you can be sure at least some of them will re-surface in future years.

I think it's safe to say that the importance of these national

partnerships will continue to grow. As budgets tighten and resources shrink, partnerships will no longer be the exception, they will be the rule in our quest to identify ways to better serve veterans and their families.

I'm proud that WDVA has paved the way with a number of state partnerships and is seen as an example of how to serve veterans outside the boundaries of a single agency.

At the state level, we have long understood the value of partnerships and their ability to make a difference in the lives of veterans. These partnerships exist in our State Veterans Homes with the Federal VA and other community providers resulting in top notch care. They exist with other state agencies, such as the Department of Social and Health Services and Employment Security, as we identify veterans and widows of veterans, unaware that they are entitled to VA benefits or who need a job. They exist with Veteran Service Organizations through a Claims Quality Assurance Program resulting in faster decisions for veterans, and with homeless providers resulting in veterans being connected to their VA benefits. More recently, they exist to ensure the Veterans of Iraq & Afghanistan know that we are here for them.

It's easy to predict that the future will bring change. The tough part is anticipating, participating and influencing change in the right direction.

One thing I'm sure of - our ability to continue effective partnering is the key to our success in 'Serving Those Who Served'.



Lloyd Burroughs

NEW VAAC MEMBER APPOINTED

Governor Gregoire appointed Lloyd Burroughs of Tacoma to the Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee. Burroughs served in the U.S. Army from 1962-1984 and worked for the Department of the Navy as a supervisory data technician and is the Washington State Commander for the National Association for Black Veterans. The committee advises the governor and director of the Department of Veterans Affairs on state programs related to veterans, their dependents and survivors.

For additional information about the VAAC meeting schedule and a list of other members, please visit: www.dva.wa.gov and click on the VAAC button in the left column.

Purple Heart Recipient Recognition Day – August 7th

The Medal of Honor that is now the Purple Heart actually began as the 'Badge of Military Merit.' On August 7th, 1782 in Newburgh, New York, General George Washington designed a new badge of distinction for enlisted men and noncommissioned officers. They were awarded for 'any singularly meritorious action.' The badge was a figure of a heart in purple cloth or silk, edged with narrow lace or binding. It was pinned to a uniform coat above the left breast. That was then, this is now.

On January 7th of the year 1931, a new design was reopened. Ms. Elizabeth Will, an army heraldic specialist in the Office of the Quarter, created the design sketch for the present medal of the Purple Heart. It consists of a purple enameled heart within a bronze quarter inch border showing a relief profile of George Washington in continental uniform. Washington's family coat of arms adorns the medal, along with an inscription inside the heart that reads, 'For Military Merit.'

The Purple Heart is awarded to any member of the Armed Forces that has been wounded or killed, died as a result of a wound in battle, or otherwise designated by the President of the United States. This now includes those persons killed as a result of friendly fire. Now we celebrate Purple Heart Day on the anniversary of its inception, August 7th. On this day it is our patriotic duty to remember and recognize those people willing to serve our country, no matter the price.

Source: U.S. Army, Center for Military History, The American War Library

Yakama Nation Member Receives Purple Heart



Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs recently had the opportunity to provide assistance and guidance to the Yakama Nation Tribal Veterans Representatives that led to the presentation of a Purple Heart medal to Elder Louis Cloud.

"During a Tribal Veterans Representative (TVR) conference at the Tulalip reservation, we heard testimony from an "Elder" who was a member of the Yakama Nation," said Jim Rising, WDVA program manager for Vet Services in Olympia.

"This World War II veteran had stated he had been wounded during WWII and had never received his Purple Heart for the wounds received in action," said Rising. "He also stated his WWII report of separation had been lost and he had no available "proof" of the wounds. When we returned from the conference, staff conducted a WWII War Bonus record search to see if we could find any record of this individual. Low and behold, we found his record in our archives. We provided a copy of the records confirming the warrior had been wounded September 24, 1944, in the Eastern Mediterranean campaign. We directed the Yakama TVR to take the evidence to Representative Doc Hastings to have the appropriate medal issued to the man."

During a ceremony celebrating the 150th anniversary of the Yakama Peace Treaty, the veteran received the medal he had earned 61 years ago.

Remember Our POW/MIA's September 16, 2005



Those who have served, and those currently serving in the uniformed services of the United States, are ever mindful that the sweetness of enduring peace has always been tainted by the bitterness of personal sacrifice. We are compelled to never forget that while we enjoy our daily pleasures, there are others who have endured and may still be enduring the agonies of pain, deprivation and imprisonment.

I call your attention to the Motorcycle occupying a place of dignity and honor within the memorial.

It is parked alone, symbolizing the fact that members of our armed forces are missing from our ranks. They are referred to as POWs and MIAs.

We call them comrades.

They are unable to be with their loved ones and families, so we join together to pay humble tribute to them, and to bear witness to their continued absence.

It is parked on a cloth of white, symbolic of the purity of their intentions to respond to their Country's call to arms.

The single rose on the seat signifies the blood they may have shed in sacrifice to ensure the freedom of our beloved United States of America. This rose also reminds us of the family and friends of our missing comrades who keep faith while awaiting their return.

The red ribbon on the handlebar represents the red ribbons worn on the lapels of the thousands who demand, with unyielding determination, a proper account of our comrades who are not among us.

The dew rag, emblazoned with the POW/MIA remembrance symbol, is a reminder of the countless fallen tears of families as they wait.

The helmet is inverted; they cannot ride with us at this time.

The bike is without a rider. They are NOT here.

The candle is reminiscent of the light of hope that lives in our hearts to illuminate their way home, away from their captors, to open arms of a grateful nation.

A set of boots and gloves stand ready, in anticipation of their safe return.

The American Flag reminds us that many of them may never return - and have paid the supreme sacrifice to ensure our freedom.

Let us remember - and never forget - their sacrifice.

May God forever watch over them and protect them and their families.

Check the "Public Events" page at www.dva.wa.gov for POW/MIA Recognition Day Ceremonies.

Freedom Salute Honors 60th Anniversary of the End of WWII

In June, Governor Christine Gregoire laid a wreath at Normandy American Cemetery in France in honor of 82 Washingtonians who are buried there.

"We will forever be indebted to these soldiers and their families for making the ultimate sacrifice to preserve our freedom," said Gregoire. "With love of country in their hearts and courage in their souls, they entered the valley of death. Let us never forget their sacrifice."

In total, 5,840 servicemen from Washington gave their lives during World War II. The visit held special significance for the governor's husband, Mike, a Vietnam combat veteran who has made veterans issues his top priority as Washington's first gentleman.

The World War II Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial is situated on a cliff overlooking Omaha Beach and the English Channel in Colleville-sur Mer, France. It is just east of St. Laurent-sur-Mer and northwest of Bayeux, about 170 miles west of Paris. It covers 172 acres and contains the graves of 9,387 American military dead, most of whom gave their lives during the landings and ensuing operations of World War II.

On the walls of the semicircular garden on the east side of the memorial are inscribed the names of 1,557 American Missing who gave their lives in the service of their country, but whose remains were not located or identified.

The memorial consists of a semicircular colonnade with a loggia at each end containing maps and narratives of the military operations. At the center is a bronze statue titled "Spirit of American Youth." An orientation table overlooks the beach and depicts the landings at Normandy. Facing west at the memorial, one sees in the foreground the reflecting pool, the mall with burial areas to either side and the circular chapel beyond. Behind the chapel are statues representing the United States and France.



Gov. Gregoire, her daughter Michelle, and first gentleman Mike present a wreath, banner and sign listing the names of 82 Washington servicemen buried at the Normandy American Cemetery.

Preserving History of Women and Their Roles During WWII Wins Legislative Approval

Senate Bill 5563 – Oral History – Women in World War II was signed into Washington State Law during the 2005 Legislative session, and is effective August 1, 2005.

Funds have been appropriated to record the memories and histories of the women of Washington who served their country during WWII. The histories are to include those who served in the armed forces of the United States, nursing and support services to the troops to include those who worked in industries that supported service men and women abroad.

These women held our families, businesses, and communities together, living with rationed goods and services so that the service men and women fighting in the war would have the materials they needed to be successful....The legislature further finds that to have a clearer reflection of women's sacrifices on behalf of freedom and democracy, it is necessary to include in the World War II oral history project the memories of women who contributed to the war effort through either military service or other important contributions to our nation, state, or communities. RCW 28A.300.370

Contact information concerning interviews will be posted on the Foundation website at www.wwiihistoryclass.com/

McChord Air Expo 2005 set for July 30-31

The U.S. Air Force Demonstration Squadron, known as the Thunderbirds, is scheduled to appear at the expo. The Thunderbirds perform precision aerial maneuvers in F-16 Fighting Falcons, highlighting the capabilities of the modern high-performance aircraft.

Besides the Thunderbirds, other demonstrations include Russian Thunder, Bud Granley Family Airshows, the Red Baron Pizza Squadron, the Red Bull Mig-17, Tim Weber in the Extra 300L, a T-6 Texan II, the U.S. Air Force Academy parachute team's Wings of Blue, a C-17 and static displays of old and new aircraft.

McChord's Air Expo is free and open to the public.



America's Celebrate Freedom Salute

The Washington City of Vancouver has been chosen by the Department of Defense as one of six cities across the U.S. to hold an event in honor of the 60th Anniversary of the end of World War II.

This three day event – August 26 – 28, 2005 - will include Concerts, Fireworks, Veteran Reunion Tent, Home Front Workers Tent, Marshall Lecture, USO Style Hangar Dance at Pearson Air Museum, Vintage Aircraft, among many other activities.

This event is to honor World War II Veterans but will also honor all Veterans and Home Front Workers and is open to the public.

For additional information, visit the "America's Celebrate Freedom Salute" Vancouver website at www.AmericasSalute.org, e-mail Deborah.Walstra@vnhrt.org, or call 360-992-1800



Well-Trained Service Officers Enhance Success of Receiving Entitlements

Last issue, Department Service Officers Court Fraley with the Washington Department of Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Kathy Nylen, Washington Department of the American Legion, addressed the role of Service Officers in assisting Veterans receive entitlement for a wide range of benefits from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

While veterans can apply for benefits directly with the VA, even on its Web site, experts recommend that those seeking compensation for disabilities get the free help of a well-trained VA-accredited service officer.

Because service-officer training varies widely, here are some questions to ask when shopping for a claims helper:

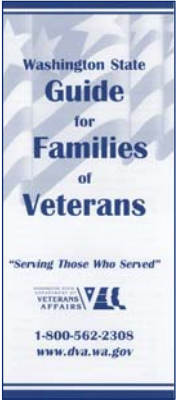
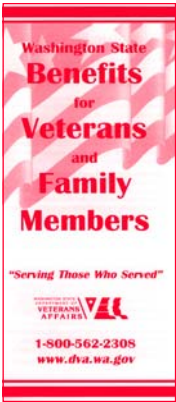
- ☞ How much training and experience do you have?
- ☞ What's your approach to researching and building a claim?
- ☞ How much work will you do, and how much will I be responsible for?
- ☞ Is this your full-time job? Or do you just handle claims occasionally?
- ☞ What's your success rate for handling my type of claim?
- ☞ What resources does your organization have if my claim is denied and I need to appeal?

To locate a service officer in your area, visit www.dva.wa.gov or call 1-800-562-2308.

WHY GO IT ALONE?

New WDVA Informational Brochures Available to Assist Veterans

The Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs provides the following brochures that can be printed from the WDVA webpage at <http://www.dva.wa.gov/Publications.htm> or call 1-800-562-0132 to request copies.



Family Activity Day Schedule

(Please check with team leaders to confirm locations & times).

Joel Berlien 360-586-1089 joelb@dva.wa.gov	Ric Price 206-296-7569 ricp@dva.wa.gov	Tom Riggs 360-586-1091 tomr@dva.wa.gov	Ken Hix/George Crossland 509-689-3666/509-826-8057 kenh@genext.net
Lonnie James 509-457-2790 lonniej@dva.wa.gov	Jerry Pfannenstiel 360-929-8028 Gerald@dva.wa.gov	Steve Prince 509-528-0900 E5Prince@aol.com	Marv King 509-344-5779 Marvk@dva.wa.gov

August 20, 2005				
Team Leader	Unit Information	Location	Time	Point of Contact
Joel Berlien	HHB, 2/146 Field Artillery	Olympia	0800 - 1200	
Ric Price	SVC, 2/146 Field Artillery	Centralia	0800 - 1200	
Tom Riggs	A Co, 1/61 Inf	Kent	0800 - 1200	
Tom Riggs	B Co, 1/61 Inf	Kent	1300 - 1700	
Ken Hix/George Crossland	C Co, 1/61 Inf	Moses Lake	0800 - 1200	
Marv King	HHC, 1/61 Inf	Spokane	1300 - 1700	
Jerry Pfannenstiel	HHC, 898 Eng Approx 80	Everett	0800 - 1200	
Jerry Pfannenstiel	A Co, 898 Eng Approx 70	Everett	1300 - 1700	
Lonnie James	B Co, 1/81 Bn	Yakima	0800 - 1200	
August 21, 2005				
Jerry Pfannenstiel	C Co, 898 Eng	Bellingham	0800 - 1200	
Joel Berlien	C Btry, 2/146 Field Artillery	Vancouver	0800 - 1200	
September 3, 2005				
Tom Riggs	USAR - HHC (Terminal)	Tacoma	0800 - 1200	
September 10, 2005				
Ric Price	A Btry, 2/146 Field Artillery	Montesano	0800 - 1200	
Tom Riggs	A Co, 1/81 BN	Seattle	0800 - 1200 & 1300 - 1700	
Joel Berlien	E Co, 303 Cav	Puyallup	1300 - 1700	
October 1, 2005				
Marv King	B Btry 2/146 Field Artillery	Spokane	0800 - 1200	
October 2, 2005				
Tom Riggs	IOSC/341st MI IOSC Senior NCO – CSM Bill Barkley 341st MI Cdr – MAJ Woodward Senior NCO – CSM Marv Lindley Approx 110	Camp Murray	0800 - 1200	SFC Matt Purcell 253-680-4304 Matthew.Purcell@wa.ngb.army.mil

Developing new partnerships with other agencies and organizations, is producing success stories for Washington’s veterans and their families, employees, particularly

Here are just a few of the recent achievements for our veterans:

★ A referral from a local emergency shelter concerning a 63-year-old Vietnam-era veteran living in a homeless encampment off I-5, resulted in his becoming a resident of the Washington Veterans Home in Retsil. Veterans Benefits Specialist Steven Gill, Lacey Police Department’s Lt. Chris Ward, Kelly Wilson with Backpacks for the Homeless, a volunteer at Bread and Roses and WDVA’s Susie Houston spent countless hours to ensure the veteran’s comfort during the three week process time and included providing safe shelter, food, new clothes, accompanying him to the emergency room for an infected finger, daily visits and laundry service. He was even taken to dinner the night before he moved to Retsil, and breakfast the next morning, before he was personally driven to his new home.

★ The family of a deployed National Guardsman has been able to keep their home, their automobile and bring overdue utility payments current, all because of the quick action and knowledge of WDVA Veterans Community Service Coordinator Jerry Pfannenstiel, American Legion’s Department Service Officer Kathy Nysten, Sarah Hinman with Skagit County Veterans Assistance Fund, and Joe Dixon of the Oak Harbor VFW.

★ A Montana National Guardsman was sent to the Seattle VA Intensive Care Unit after being injured in Iraq. He and his wife were close to losing their home when Jennifer Wortman, a Family Assistance Coordinator with the Washington National Guard, contacted WDVA Veterans Benefit Specialist Tom Riggs. Tom put out a request for assistance to a large group of partnering organizations, and within hours this young soldier and his family were taken under the wing of American Legion’s Department Service Officer Kathy Nysten. Kathy’s knowledge of programs and partnerships produced assistance from the Legion’s National Children and Youth Division and the NW Chapter of Paralyzed Veterans of America.

★ A 23-year-old, honorably discharged U.S. Army veteran and a 70-year-old, honorably discharged U.S. Marine Corps veteran were both in jail for assault (committed while intoxicated). Gary Clark, with the Veterans Incarcerated Program, advocated for each with the Court for a comprehensive treatment alternative - while under Court control - instead of prison. King County Superior Court agreed, and released them to participate in programs at the Seattle VA Medical Center’s Addiction Treatment Center.

★ A 32 year-old US Army veteran, who served from 1995 to 1999, and rose to the rank of sergeant, came to WDVA’s Veterans Reintegration Services at King County Veterans’ Program (KCVV) in September 2004. Living in a tent, his only income was \$106 per month from the VA for a service-connected back injury. In the Army, he had a telecommunications MOS, which he worked in after leaving the military. After September 11th, 2001, he was laid-off and became under-employed, working temporary jobs because of the decline in the telecommunications industry. As a result, he was very depressed about his housing and employment situation.

Initially, Veterans Benefits Specialist Steve Cline was able to have the veteran housed at the William Booth Center in Seattle, a clean and sober male dormitory style transitional shelter operated by the Salvation Army. Cline was then able to provide financial assistance for storage through the King County Veterans’ Assistance Fund (VAF). Because the veteran had cited depression, Cline referred him to the Seattle VAMC, where he began group mental health counseling, was assigned a psychiatrist, and received the needed treatment to stabilize his mental health issues. Cline advised him to seek a disability upgrade from the VA, apply for Chapter 31, Vocational Rehabilitation Services, and file for General Assistance for Unemployability (GAU) from DSHS for his back injury and depression issues. Cline then referred him to a KCVV social worker, Marty Kaplan, for a full vocational and career assessment, which showed that he has an aptitude for business.

Recently, the veteran was granted GAU, the VA upgraded his VA compensation to 20% and approved him for Chapter 31, Vocational Rehabilitation. With his new income sources, Cline was able to assist him with moving into the Compass Center Shoreline Veterans Program, a new VA Grant and per Diem transitional housing facility in Shoreline, where his rent is based upon thirty percent of his income. He has applied to the University of Washington’s Business School and hopes to begin work on his Bachelors in Business soon.



Steve C.



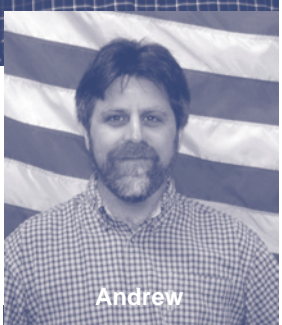
Ben



Joel



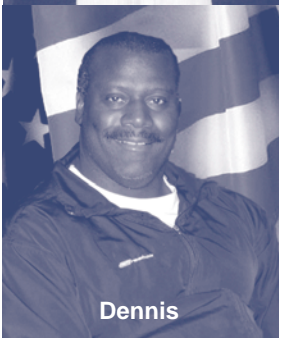
Dick



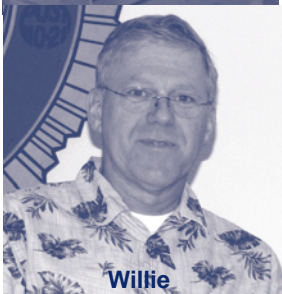
Andrew



Alex



Dennis



Willie



Tom S.



Eva



Jerry P



Valerie



Derold



Gary



Lynda



John

Increase Success for Who Served”!

and organizations, as well as calling on established
veterans and bringing a renewed energy to agency
ularly Vet Services.

★ In September 2004, a veteran who had been homeless for a few years, was referred to WDVA by the Olympia Salvation Army. He had difficulty maintaining employment due to a mental health condition, and was currently receiving GAU from the State because of this condition. The veteran said that he wanted to be employed full-time and be able to earn enough money to end his cycle of homelessness, but that he was just unable to do so because of his health and because of the fact that he lacked any specific job market skills beyond laboring. Veterans Benefits Specialist Steve Gill enrolled the veteran into WDVA's Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program(HVRP) and began exploring options for vocational training with Bates Technical College. Gill enlisted the assistance of Veterans Benefits Specialist Barbara Logan, who assisted the veteran with filing a service-connected disability claim for his mental health condition - the same condition that he was receiving GAU for.

In October 2004, WDVA's HVRP program provided funding to allow the veteran to attend a forklift operator's course at Bates Technical College and become certified as a forklift operator. HVRP also assisted him with transportation (bus passes) to allow him to get to Bates for this course and to begin looking for employment. Although HVRP assisted the veteran with these items, he was unable to find gainful employment because of his ongoing mental health condition. In late October 2004, he left the Salvation Army shelter and began living on the streets.

The veteran remained on the streets for the next five months until he was awarded a 100% service-connected disability rating from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for his mental health condition. In late May of 2005, after receiving his first compensation check (a back payment of over \$13,000) he came back into the Olympia Service Center to thank Barbara Logan for her assistance in filing the claim and to let WDVA know he temporarily moved into a hotel until his regular monthly compensation payments begin. He also thanked WDVA for the support provided him through HVRP and wanted to know if he could pay back the assistance HVRP provided him. Gill explained to the veteran that he didn't need to pay HVRP back for this assistance but that WDVA just wanted to know that he was off the streets and that he was receiving the health care treatment he needed. Logan recently assisted the veteran with setting up direct deposit for his compensation checks.

★ WDVA's DSHS program received a referral on a veteran's widow receiving Medicaid services and \$90 a month VA Death Pension. WDVA Service Center staff reviewed the client's VA records, and had her entitlement changed from Non-Service Connected Death Pension to service connected Dependency Indemnity Compensation (DIC) with Aid and Attendance. The new award paid her \$1240 per month, a difference of \$1150. The client was enrolled into the CHAMPVA health coverage program and now has 75% of her skilled nursing costs covered by CHAMPVA. She is now private pay and not in receipt of Medicaid. She currently is able to keep \$400 of her income each month and is no longer subject to the Medicaid Estate Recovery laws when she passes away. Her estate is protected for her children.

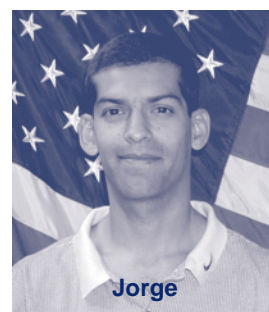


★ A 100 % disabled Vet from Kent, WA, had the following financial problems in August 2003, while under the fiduciary care of a family member: 1) House was put on foreclosure because of non-mortgage payment for several years. 2) Property Tax was not paid since the year 2000. 3) Credit card debt in excess of \$17,000.00. 4) VA overpayment in excess of \$7,000.00.

WDVA's Veterans Estate Management Program in Olympia became the Veteran's Fiduciary at that time. Veterans Benefits Specialist Ben Pineda worked with all the creditors involved, making arrangements to bring everything current and providing the veteran with enough money for personal living expense, utilities, phone, cable, and personal items, as well as peace of mind.



★ A homeless woman veteran staying at the Salvation Army with her two young, school-age children came to WDVA's Vet Services looking for assistance with housing. She had recently been evicted due to financial difficulties, but was employed full-time. Through a Federal Grant, WDVA administers the Homeless Women Veterans Reintegration Project, and Veterans Benefits Specialists Steve Gill and Barbara Logan were able to assist the veteran in getting into a house. Steve and Barbara met the veteran at her storage unit, helped load her furniture onto the truck, took everything to her new house and unloaded all of the items. HWVRP also helped provide some money for food through gift certificates from McDonald's and from Fred Meyers. Within a year, the veteran took another job and then decided to pursue her education. Once enrolled in school, WDVA hired her as a work study, allowing her to work part time while attending school. She is now working for the state in a permanent, part-time position, is continuing on with her education, and is still a part-time work study for WDVA.



Jorge



Sharon



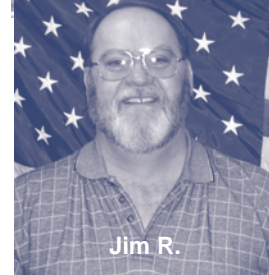
Marv



Tom R.



Mac



Jim R.



Robin



Kenny



Harry T.



Susie



Steven G



Jim G.



Barb



Lonnie



Richard

Washington State Veterans Homes

SVH Benefits from Water Witching

Jim Nelson the Commander of American Legion in Kettle Falls, Washington came to the Spokane Veterans Home in the spring of 2002 to visit a friend. Nelson noticed his friend needed a TV and the facility was unable to provide one. From then on, Nelson knew what his calling was.

When Nelson goes out and dowses (using a divining rod to locate underground water) a person's property, instead of paying him, he asks that they make a donation to the Spokane Veterans Home. As of today over 60 individuals and companies have donated \$3,117 since the spring of 2002. The monies that donated to the betterment fund have been used for many different things to enhance and enrich the quality of life for resident's at the Spokane Veterans Home.

Thank You Jim Nelson and the donors listed here:

2002

Maureen Hazlett
Ken and Nancy Bensimon
Dave and Christine Burnell
Ron and Carol Echert
Al Pauent
Chris and Kris Petterson
Denise Petterson
My Life has Meaning
Bruce and Martha Barthaly
Lewis Delp
Becky Smith
Mary Buandt
Paul Olsen
Debbie @ Hudson Bay Restaurant
Colville Chamber of Commerce
Don and Fran Disque
Bob McDonald
Ray Thompson
Mike Hieronymos
John Novvis
Dub Monday

2003

Dave and Christine Burnell
Don and Fran Disque
Mike Hieronymos
Howard Gilmore
Chris McCelroy
Ernie Lee Overseer
Mel and Nancy Anderson
Bill Nell
Stan and Patricia Handley
Cleo and Mary Iout Just
Bob Weimer
Ron Rhen
Mike and Bonnie Pete
Jim and Linda Holbeck
Fred and Marlene Heining
Clay Kautes

2004

Pamela Lynch
Paul and Janelle Viden
Compassion Israel
Serious Israel
Joni Kautes

2005

Columbia Cedar (sawmill)
Ann Stephenson
Alan Hall

Total to date: \$3,117

Future donors will be listed on the website: www.dva.wa.gov/washington_state_veterans_homes.htm.

For Donation ideas and ways to volunteer at any WA Veterans Home, visit www.dva.wa.gov/washington_state_veterans_homes.htm and click on Gift Catalog/Memorials

Sailors Help Move Vets Into New Digs



A hundred sailors and their spouses from the aircraft carrier USS Stennis were at the veterans home in Retsil, moving the elderly residents, mostly veterans of World War II and the Korean War, from the home's oldest building (#9), opened in 1929, into their new rooms in the \$47.8 million skilled care facility .

Many of the residents walked alongside the young sailors on the trip from their old residences, to the new. Others in wheelchairs were pushed from one place to the other.

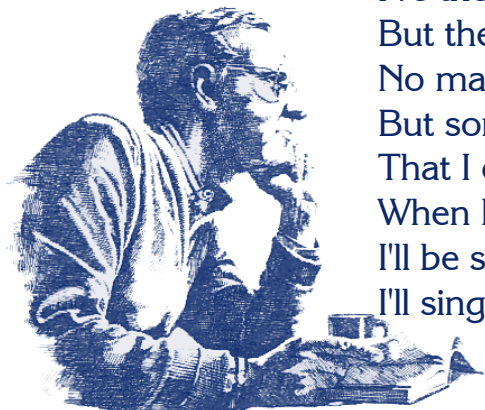
Earlier in the month, another group from the USS Stennis helped move residents from Building 10 into their rooms in the new facility. After a quick briefing, each team was responsible for moving approximately eight residents.

Volunteers packed up all of the resident's belongings, hauled it to the new building, and then assisted the residents in unpacking and organizing their new rooms. Residents were happy to have individual care and assistance for the move.

The volunteers were later given a barbecue lunch to show appreciation for their helpfulness and hard work.



Nowhere



We are in a land of nowhere, and can't seem to get out.
I've tried many avenues, as I move about,
But there does not seem any direction,
No matter where I go.
But someday I will find that door,
That I once did know.
When I have found the avenue,
I'll be so happy there,
I'll sing and shout with happiness, now my mind is clear.

-- A resident of the Spokane Veterans Home

Washington State Veterans Homes

DeVore Named WSH Superintendent



Effective July 1, 2005, David DeVore was appointed Superintendent of the WA Soldiers Home.

A 27 year retiree from the United States Navy, David has worked since March, 2002 for the State of Washington. Over the past year, he has proven his commitment to veterans by serving as the Associate Superintendent of the Soldiers Home. David has proven his exemplary leadership skills throughout his employment with WDVA and has established positive working relationships with the Orting Community and Veterans Organizations that support the Soldiers Home. David has completed his Administrator in Training Program to become a Licensed Nursing Home Administrator, a requirement for the Superintendent position, and holds a Bachelors Degree in Health Sciences from the George Washington University in Washington D.C.



Dieter Eppel D.O.

Orting Selects New Physician

Dieter Eppel D.O. was recently selected as the new physician for the Soldiers Home. Dr. Eppel, originally from Germany, has been in family practice for 28 years, which includes a significant portion devoted to geriatric care. For ten years he was Assistant Medical Director at Mercy Rehabilitation Center in Auburn, New York. With this experience he is well aware of the needs of the elderly. Dr. Eppel was also a Medical Director for the mentally disabled for many years.

As the Home's physician his philosophy is to insure that the best medical care is provided along with proper nutrition, mental health and social support. He has excellent communication skills and is well qualified to provide excellent care to the residents.

"I appreciate this opportunity to be the physician at the Washington Soldiers Home and am very excited about moving to the Puget Sound area." Dr. Eppel stated.

Soldiers Home Gets a Make-over

Over the past several months, the Orting Soldiers Home has taken on a new look, due to the hard work of the WDVA Home's Maintenance Department.

New wiring and new steam valves have been installed to accommodate air conditioning for the residents in Roosevelt Barracks.

"Our first intent, now that the air conditioning project is completed, was to give Roosevelt a more home-like feeling," said facilities manager Linda Delatorre.

They started by painting the floors, giving them a brand new look. Painter Tim Wilkins then added his personal touch to the interior paint job by fabricating a leaf stencil that borders the handrailings.

The restrooms got some much needed pizzazz by installing new countertops, as well as painted walls and ceilings a light purple. To finish off the job, easier to use faucets were installed on all the resident's sinks.

In addition, Betsy Ross Hall received an interior paint job of yellow and white, and now looks bright and cheery as well.

"Our groundskeepers have also done a fabulous job on the campus," said Delatore. "Every person who enters the Soldiers Home raves about the grounds and how beautiful they are...it puts a smile on your face upon entering the gate."



Happy residents of Roosevelt Barracks in their newly painted and air-conditioned building.

Street Talk

With the Soldiers Home Residents in Orting What is your favorite Summertime Activity and Why?



"Fishing and boating, because they are active sports and I'm an active person, but I prefer ice fishing in Michigan."
--Robert Lester, WWII Army Veteran



"I like to go camping, like we did when I was young on Newberry creek in Indiana."
--Ed Larimer, WWII Navy Veteran



"Baseball, I used to play 1st base and I like to watch the Mariners."
--Tom Davis, Korean War Air Force Veteran



"Camping and golf. We use to have a lot of fun camping near Mt. Hood in Oregon."
--Greg Heiden, Vietnam Era Army Veteran



"I like to go to the city and look around and then figure out how to get back to the country."
--Frank Houston



New Handbook Updates Veterans Benefits

WASHINGTON -- A new edition of the popular handbook Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) updates the rates for certain federal payments and outlines a variety of programs and benefits for American veterans. Most of the nation's 25 million veterans qualify for some VA benefits, which range from health care to burial in a national cemetery. In addition to describing benefits provided by VA, the 2005 edition of the 120-page booklet provides an overview of programs and services for veterans provided by other federal agencies.

Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents includes resources to help veterans access their benefits, with a listing of toll-free phone numbers, Internet addresses and a directory of VA facilities throughout the country. The handbook can be downloaded free from VA's Web site at <http://www.va.gov/opa/feature/>.

The handbook is one of the top selling consumer publications of the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO). GPO accepts credit card orders for the publication at 866-512-1800 (toll-free) for a cost of \$7 each to U.S. addresses, or \$67 for bulk orders of 25 copies. It can be ordered by mail from the GPO at Superintendent of Documents, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7954 (stock #051-000-00228-8).

In addition to health-care and burial benefits, veterans may be eligible for programs providing home loan guaranties, educational assistance, training and vocational rehabilitation, income assistance pensions, life insurance and compensation for service-connected illnesses or disabilities. In some cases, survivors of veterans may also be entitled to benefits.

The handbook describes programs for veterans with specific service experiences, such as prisoners of war or those concerned about environmental exposures in Vietnam or in the Gulf War, as well as special benefits for veterans with severe disabilities.

Source: USDVA April 15, 2005

Veterans Disability Commission Begins Work

WASHINGTON – The Veterans' Disability Benefits Commission, established by Congress to review benefits going to disabled veterans and the survivors of deceased veterans, held its first meetings May 9 and 10 in Washington, D.C.

The 13-member panel, chaired by retired Army Lt. Gen. James Terry Scott, is scheduled to issue its final report to Congress in 15 months.

In setting up the commission, Congress instructed it to examine three specific issues:

- the "appropriateness" of compensation and other benefits for disabled veterans and for the survivors of veterans who died from causes related to military service;
- "the appropriateness of the level of such benefits"; and
- "the appropriate standard . . . for determining whether a disability or death of a veteran should be compensated."

The commission will take testimony at public meetings, oversee studies of the United States' disability compensation systems, and receive input from other organizations, including the Institute of Medicine and the Department of Defense.

People interested in presenting oral or written testimony to the commission should contact the panel's acting executive director, Ray Wilburn, at (202) 273-7509, or via e-mail at vetscommission@va.gov.

Source: USDVA May 11, 2005

VA, Army Sign Walter Reed Training Pact

WASHINGTON – Leaders of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Walter Reed Army Medical Center signed an agreement today giving severely injured service members practical help landing civilian jobs.

Under the "Vet IT" agreement, VA will offer vocational training and temporary jobs at its Washington headquarters to service members recovering at the Army facility from traumatic injuries.

More than 30 Walter Reed patients have already received similar on-the-job experience at VA headquarters since a test of the program began in September 2004. So far, 15 have been hired permanently by VA.

VA is the nation's second-largest Cabinet Department, and one of the nation's largest employers of disabled veterans, with about 20,000 disabled workers among its workforce of more than 230,000.

With a current budget of more than \$68 billion, VA gives health care to more than 5.2 million patients yearly and provides monthly disability compensation to nearly 2.7 million veterans, while operating 120 national cemeteries, providing educational assistance to nearly 500,000 and administering insurance programs that cover more than 7.2 million beneficiaries.

Source: USDVA June 6, 2005

VA to Hire 50 New OIF/OEF Outreach Counselors

WASHINGTON -- The Department of Veterans Affairs will hire 50 veterans of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom (OIF/OEF) to provide outreach services to veterans returning from Afghanistan and Iraq. They will join 50 other OIF/ OEF outreach counselors already hired by VA.

The outreach counselors will brief servicemen and women leaving the military about VA benefits and services available to them and their family members. They will also encourage new veterans to use their local Vet Center as a point of entry to VA and its services.

"We believe that our outreach to veterans is most effective when the message is carried by their comrades," said Dr. Jonathan B. Perlin, VA's Acting Under Secretary for Health.

Outreach counselors visit military installations, coordinate with military family assistance centers and conduct one-on-one interviews with returning veterans and their families.

The new outreach counselors will be located in the 206 Vet Centers operated by VA throughout the country, especially near military out processing stations. They will be hired for a three-year period.

Vet Center employees have seen more than 16,000 of the 244,000 combat veterans VA estimates have left the service since the start of the Global War on Terrorism.

Source: USDVA April 6, 2005

State Legislative Update



During the 2005 Legislative Session, an unprecedented number of bills were passed making changes to laws affecting veterans. Below is a brief summary of five bills. Changes made during the 2005 Session become effective July 24, unless a different date was written in the legislation.

For additional bills not listed here and more detailed information, please visit: www.dva.wa.gov and click on 'Legislature/RCW/WAC'.

★ Veterans Assistance Fund (HB 1189)

– This fund, formerly known as the Soldiers & Sailors Fund, is administered separately by each of the 39 Counties in Washington State. In addition to modifying or repealing some out-dated provisions, HB 1189 also requires counties to establish veterans' assistance programs to address the needs of local indigent veterans and their families. Counties may authorize other entities to administer the fund and counties must establish a veterans' advisory board to advise them on relief related matters. For additional information contact your County Veterans Advisory Board or Auditor's Office.

★ Widows of Veterans Property Tax

Grant (HB 1509) – The Department of Revenue will administer a new grant program for eligible widows(ers) of veterans to assist in the payment of property taxes. Widows must be at least age 62 with an income of \$40,000 or less, and the widow of a veteran who: died as a result of a service connected disability; was rated 100% service connected for the 10 years prior to death; was a prisoner of war and rated 100% service connected for 1 year prior to death; died on active duty; or died in active military training status. The Department of Revenue is currently developing claims forms and program guidelines for this grant program. Additional information will be available in the fall of 2006.

★ Veteran Tuition Waivers (HB 1174) –

The individual waiver laws were combined into one waiver law. Colleges and Universities may use state supported waivers to waive all or a portion of tuition & fees for honorably discharged veterans & National Guard members who fought on

foreign soil or in support of those on foreign soil. Children and spouses of these veterans who are totally disabled or killed in the line of duty may also be eligible. (Colleges and Universities may waive all or a portion of tuition and fees for peacetime veterans, but General Fund-State support is not provided for these waivers.) For additional information, contact your College or University.

★ Veteran Conservation Corps (HB

5539) – WDVA will identify veterans, suffering from PTSD, who are interested in working on salmon recovery and water clean-up projects. Projects will be administered through the salmon recovery funding board or other similar agencies and veterans will be in close contact with a WDVA Project Coordinator. For additional information, please contact Tom Schumacher at: tom@dva.wa.gov or 1-800-562-2308.



★ Armed Forces License Plate (HB

1065) – On January 2, 2006, Veterans and Active Military personnel will be able to purchase an Armed Forces License Plate. Six plates will be available, one for each branch of service including the WA National Guard. Additional information on eligibility and availability, including a list frequently asked questions, is available at: www.dva.wa.gov (Click on 'Armed Forces License Plate', under 'Special Interest Links' near bottom of page)

Changes to WDVA Budget for 2005-2007

In addition to the 2,500 bills introduced in 2005, the Legislature was also responsible for writing the biennial budget. With shrinking resources and recent state-wide budget shortfalls, WDVA and leaders in the Veterans' Community, have worked hard to show the Legislature how our work for Veterans fits into the Priorities of Government, namely:

- Improve the **health** of Washington citizens
- Improve the **security** of Washington's vulnerable children and adults
- Improve the **economic vitality** of business and individuals
- Strengthen government's ability to achieve its results efficiently and effectively

During the session, our Governor and Legislative Leaders made the following additions to WDVA's budget:

Policy Changes -

♦ **\$25,000 provided for an Eastern Washington Cemetery Study** - In conjunction with veterans' associations and local government officials, the Department of Veterans Affairs will conduct a feasibility study of a veterans' cemetery in eastern Washington. The study shall include location, acquisition costs, projection of continued operations costs, and revenue sources for acquisition and operations. A final report of the findings shall be submitted no later than December 15, 2005.

♦ **\$25,000 provided to conduct Outreach for Returning Veterans** - Funding is provided for the development of a public service announcement outreach campaign directed at returning veterans from Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

♦ **\$170,000 provided for the Post Traumatic Stress Disorder** - The post-traumatic stress counseling program is expanded to address the needs of veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.

♦ **\$140,000 provided for the Veterans Conservation Corps** - Funding is provided for the Department of Veterans Affairs to assist with organization and development of the Veterans Conservation Corps established by Senate Bill 5539.

Hats Off

In Appreciation!



Aaron Bonagofski, a student with the Olympia School District Alternative Education Program (center), was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation from WDVA staff Tom Riggs and Eva Campbell.

In recognition of Outstanding Service to Washington State Veterans.

The service you provided from January 4, 2005 to June 7, 2005 while working as a volunteer in the Reception Office of the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs Service Center allowed this agency to provide a personal letter from the Governor to over 3,752 veterans of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom. Additionally, your timely and accurate input of DD Forms 214, Certificate of Release or Discharge From Active Duty, into our database will enable us to provide outreach to these veterans for many years to come. Your volunteer spirit and excellent work skills bring great credit to you, this organization, and the many veterans in Washington.

Thank you for "Serving Those Who Served"



Holiday Inn Supplies Blankets for Stand Down



John Mansfield, 04-05 VFW Dist 3 Commander (right) and Mark Mascho, Pierce Co Veterans Bureau store blankets and pillows donated by the Holiday Inn for the Stand Down this Fall.

Mansfield also collects household items through his real estate company that have been left behind following the sale of a home. Items are sold at the Puyallup Elks rummage sale and the proceeds will then be donated to veterans betterment programs.

Adopt an Armory

Everett

2730 Oakes Avenue
WA 98201-3688
(425) 317-3527
WNGFP-
EverettFAC@wa.ngb.army.mil

Kent

24410 Military Road
WA 98032-4110
(253) 945-1869
WNGFP-
KentFAC@wa.ngb.army.mil

Longview

819 Vandercook Way
WA 98632
(360)-577-2023
WNGFP-
LongviewFAC@wa.ngb.army.mil

Moses Lake

6500 32nd Ave NE,
WA 98837-3212
(509) 766-2551
WNGFP-
MosesLakeFAC@wa.ngb.army.mil

Olympia

515 South Eastside Street
WA 98507-2197
(360) 704-6739
WNGFP-
OlympiaFAC@wa.ngb.army.mil

Pasco

127 W. Clark St
WA 99301-5622
(509) 546-4384
WNGFP-
PascoFAC@wa.ngb.army.mil

Port Orchard

1950 Mile Hill Drive
WA 98366-3526
(360) 895-6151
WNGFP-
PortOrchardFAC@wa.ngb.army.mil

Seattle

1601 West Armory Way
WA 98119-2786
1-800-364-7492

Spokane

Spokane IAP, PO Box 19038
WA 99219-9038
(509) 458-5415/5416
WNGFP-
SpokaneFAC@wa.ngb.army.mil

Tacoma

715 S 11th
WA 98405-4642
1-800-364-7492
WNGFP-
TacomaFAC@wa.ngb.army.mil

Vancouver

Bldg 993 Vancouver Barracks
WA 98661-3826
1-800-364-7492

Yakima

2501 Airport Lane
WA 98902-5108
(509) 469-4638/4640
WNGFP-
Yakima@wa.ngb.army.mil

Air National Guard Family

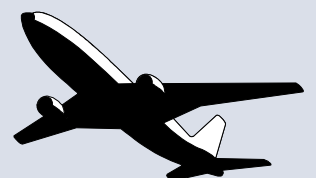
Readiness/Volunteer Coordinator
Building 101, 41st Division Way
Camp Murray, Tacoma, WA 98430
1-800-268-3608 or 253-512-3397
angela.rivera@wataco.ang.af.mil

141 Air Refueling Wing

Fairchild AFB
Spokane, WA
(509) 247-7009
Family.Readiness@wafair.ang.af.mil

Airport Gate Passes for Military Passenger Family Members

The Transportation Security Administration has issued a directive pertaining to military passengers at U.S. airports.



According to Security Directive 1544-01-10w, families of military members may be granted access to sterile concourse areas to escort the military passenger to the gate or to meet a military passenger's inbound arrival at the gate.

The family member can go to the airline that the military member is flying on and receive a pass to go to the gate. They will be required to have a pass and a photo ID to get through the security checkpoint.